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Secretariat

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SECRETARY-GENERAL'S BULLETIN

To: Members of the staff

Subject: SIXTH REPORT OF THE STEERING COMMITTEE FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE STATUS OF WOMEN IN THE SECRETARIAT*

1. The purpose of the present bulletin is to inform staff members of the decisions I have taken on the findings and recommendations contained in the sixth report of the Steering Committee for the Improvement of the Status of Women in the Secretariat.

2. I have accepted the recommendations of the Steering Committee on appointment and promotion procedures. I have accordingly directed that the policy measures announced in paragraph 5 of Secretary-General's bulletin ST/SGB/237 of 18 March 1991 1/ to assist in implementing the targets for the

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* Personnel Manual index No. 1189.

1/ "In departments and offices with less than 35 per cent women overall and in those with less than 25 per cent women at levels P-5 and above, vacancies overall and in the latter group, respectively, shall be filled, when there are one or more female candidates whose qualifications match all the requirements for a vacant post, by one of these female candidates.

"In the area of recruitment, the same policy shall apply with the following exceptions:

"(a) Where the post has been vacant for 18 months and despite the best efforts of all concerned, as certified by the Office of Human Resources Management, it has not been possible to identify or secure a qualified woman candidate during this period;

"(b) The post is being filled through a competitive examination."

representation of women in the Secretariat be incorporated into administrative instructions on appointment and promotion, so that these measures become an integral part of the appointment and promotion process. With regard to the policy measures relating to recruitment, I have decided that the search period before any exceptions can be made should be reduced from 18 months to 12 months.

3. In relation to the secretarial occupation, a restructuring review of jobs has been carried out which has resulted in an increase in the number of higher-level secretarial posts, particularly at the G-5 level. The improved career structure of the occupation will provide a better career path for secretarial staff. The recommendation for personal promotions for a particular group of staff has not been accepted.

4. The Steering Committee also draws attention to the recommendations relating to women in the General Service category contained in its first report, dated July 1986, which was approved by the Secretary-General. In this context, I have asked the Department of Administration and Management to conduct the study recommended by the Steering Committee on the effectiveness of competitive examinations with a view to strengthening the present format of the examinations, and to examine the policy implications and methods by which General Service staff could be enabled to compete for P-3 positions.

5. In accordance with the recommendation of the Steering Committee, I have decided to establish procedures to deal fairly and firmly with cases of alleged sexual harassment in the Secretariat.

6. Finally, I wish to reaffirm my commitment to improving the status of women in the Secretariat and to thank those who have contributed to that objective.

Boutros BOUTROS-GHALI
Secretary-General